

WHAT YOU MADE POSSIBLE

THE COUNCIL OF CANADIANS' ANNUAL REPORT

The Council of Canadians was established in 1985 to advocate for a society built on democracy, justice, and care. With the help of our members, supporters, and a vast network of volunteer chapters across the country, we have held elected representatives accountable and challenged the destructive influence of corporations on our governments.



We pride ourselves on being one of the longest standing progressive political organizations in the country – steadfast in our commitment to building a better Canada. And throughout our history, we’ve made political independence a priority, refusing to accept funding from governments or corporations. Instead, our grassroots, bottom-up approach to organizing has been made possible by the unrelenting activism and generous financial support of our members, donors, and supporters – people like you.

Here are some of the things you helped bring about over the last year.

YOU KEPT OUR MOVEMENTS GOING DESPITE A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

For more than 35 years, Council of Canadians members and supporters have been drivers of change by taking to the streets to sound the alarm on injustices and build grassroots power. The COVID-19 pandemic upended much of the organizing model we knew.

In-person meetings – once a place to collectively strategize, spark new ideas, and foster community – became replaced by virtual meetings. Overnight, we all had

to learn to use challenging new technologies and discovered a thing called “Zoom fatigue.”

Agitating for change took new shape too. No longer able to gather in person to demand change or accountability, we organized virtual days of action and leaned more heavily than ever on digital campaigning tools.

The shifts required by the pandemic have been disorienting, but the organizing never stopped – thanks to your resilience and openness to change. You’ve kept our movements going, finding new opportunities and possibilities amidst all the uncertainty. Thank you!

YOU WON!

Thanks to 13 years of hard-fought organizing and land defense led by Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island, with support from people like you, we finally said goodbye and good riddance to the Keystone XL pipeline this year. U.S. President Joe Biden revoked the project’s permit in January. And within a few months, the developer behind the pipeline officially cancelled the project.

In Alberta, you delivered a series of crushing setbacks to Big Coal. Alongside decades of

work by Indigenous grassroots leadership and partners like the Alberta Environmental Network, you stood in the way of a new coal rush when the provincial government revoked policies that had long protected the iconic Rockies from development and exploration. You forced the government to reinstate its previous policy and pause all new developments. And thanks to your activism, one coal mine has been rejected and another has been significantly delayed by an environmental assessment process.

The celebrations didn’t stop there. You also helped beat the Goldboro Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project in Nova Scotia after an eight-year fight. Alongside Mi’kmaw water protectors and other climate justice activists, you pointed out the hollowness of the company’s claims about emission reductions, benefits to First Nations, and economic opportunities.

Finally, you organized against a dangerous proposal to build a massive and permanent nuclear waste facility upstream from the Ottawa River. You convinced Ottawa City Council to take steps to protect the river from contamination – something that would have threatened the drinking water of millions of people for generations.

Thanks to your commitment to learning and growing, our movements will continue to stay strong and responsive.



YOU FOUGHT TO TURN EMPTY PROMISES INTO ACTION

When the federal government first introduced its toothless “Net-Zero Carbon Accountability Act,” many of you joined the call for stronger legislation and more ambitious climate action. The final version of the bill, which passed just in the nick of time under the cloud of a snap election, has seen important improvements. And the work continues. We look forward to continuing to make sure that, alongside legislation, accountability also comes from the strong social movements we build together.

Meanwhile, the harrowing realities in long-term care (LTC) homes during the pandemic renewed our collective calls for the need to reimagine how we care for the elderly and vulnerable. When the federal government responded to this crisis with superficial delay tactics, you demanded real change: the elimination of private for-profit LTC operators and the establishment of federally-regulated and enforceable standards.

Your calls for the government to deliver on its promise of pharmacare grew louder too. As record high job losses during the pandemic further highlighted the need for a publicly-funded universal pharmacare program, you kept up the pressure to turn that promise into a reality.

YOU STOOD FOR INDIGENOUS RIGHTS AND SOVEREIGNTY

Through your solidarity work, you have supported the struggles of Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island. The chilling images of violence and racism carried out against Mi’kmaw fishers last fall moved many of you to call for the protection of the nation’s treaty right to fish for a moderate livelihood. You also amplified the voices of Mi’kmaw grandmothers who warned that the proposed Goldboro LNG project’s work camp would be unsafe for Indigenous women and girls.

For years, you’ve advocated for the right of First Nations to have the sovereignty, resources, and tools they need to ensure their communities have access to safe drinking water on reserves.

This year, you joined in grief, reflection, and collective action in response to the

news confirming the horrors of the Indian Residential School system. As the country reckoned with its violent past and present, you joined our call to observe July 1st differently – setting aside celebrations to instead listen and learn about the legacies of genocide in Canada.

YOU CALLED FOR A JUST RECOVERY FROM THE PANDEMIC

Across the country, public transit systems suffered massive financial losses during the pandemic as fewer people paid the fares that sustain these agencies’ operations. In response, you helped build a national transit coalition and called on our governments to keep transit moving – making the case that safe, dependable, and affordable public transit is a prerequisite to a green and equitable post-pandemic economic recovery.

And as the federal government ramped up the role of the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) in its recovery planning, you emphatically said no to privatization. The CIB, with its agenda of promoting dubious public-private partnerships, has no place in our post-pandemic just recovery.

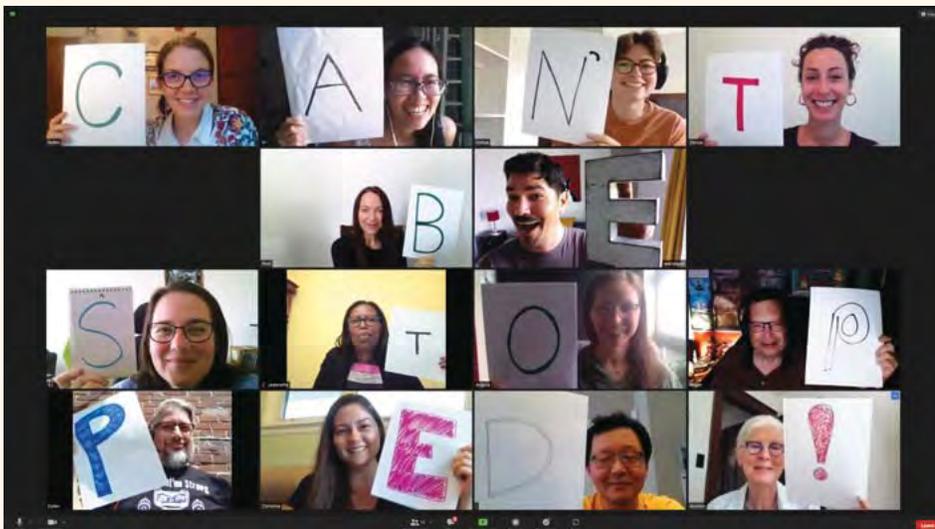
YOU SAID WATER IS NOT A COMMODITY

For years, you’ve fought hard to stop water profiteering by Nestlé, one of the world’s largest corporations. This year, the company sold its bottled water interests in Canada to Blue Triton, which wasted no time seeking a 10-year permit from the Ontario government to extract millions of litres of groundwater every day to bottle and sell.

You called on the government to stop giving away precious groundwater to billionaires and demanded that we put an end to selling water – a public resource – for obscene profits. And you pledged to do what you can to build an informed and organized movement to safeguard water as a shared resource.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14





Council of Canadians staff from across the country thank you for your generosity, hard work, and dedication!

YOU MADE THE CASE FOR A FEDERAL GREEN NEW DEAL

Calls for a Green New Deal are growing across the globe. Here in Canada, the Council has played a critical role in building local power and capacity to expand our budding network of Green New Deal communities from coast to coast. With your support and participation, we've brought local groups together to coordinate strategies for tackling the climate emergency – and to demand federal Green New Deal legislation.

This year, you also supported us in commissioning polling that revealed an extraordinary public appetite for a just energy transition. According to the poll results, more than four out of five people in the provinces of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador want to see a transition away from fossil fuels, alongside support for affected workers and marginalized groups. With your continued help, we will keep working to urge our elected leaders to catch up to popular opinion and deliver the transformative changes the public is hungry for.

YOU NEVER STOPPED LEARNING

The world changed at lightning speed last year, and you were committed to keeping up. Your movements adopted new strategies and tactics that respond to changing realities and evolving systems of power.

Many of you attended our various capacity-building workshops – learning about online organizing, strategic planning, municipal government engagement strategies, creative campaigning, community-based leadership, media messaging, and how to develop your story of self.

Thanks to your commitment to learning and growing, our movements will continue to stay strong and responsive.

YOU DONATED GENEROUSLY

None of our achievements as an organization would have been possible without your financial contributions. During the last fiscal year, despite the economic uncertainties of the pandemic, you gave a total of more than \$3 million – more than 90 per cent of the total funds the organization received in 2020. Even though we finished 2020 with a deficit, your membership and contributions mean we will finish 2021 with a surplus. **CP**

Summary statement of our revenues and expenses in the fiscal year that ended on December 31, 2020:

REVENUES

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Memberships and contributions | 3,079,309 |
| Foundation grants | 130,083 |
| Other income | 119,111 |
| Total Revenue | 3,328,503 |

EXPENSES

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Political work | 1,164,162 |
| National and international campaigns | 813,146 |
| Local and regional campaigns | 351,016 |
| Fundraising | 1,010,896 |
| Finance & admin | 650,580 |
| Communications & outreach | 523,583 |
| Annual conference | 75,573 |
| Total Expense | 3,424,794 |
| Net | (96,291) |

% OF EXPENSE TOTAL

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Political work | 34% |
| National and international campaigns | 24% |
| Local and regional campaigns | 10% |
| Fundraising | 30% |
| Finance & admin | 19% |
| Communications & outreach | 15% |
| Annual conference | 2% |

We are ever grateful to all of you – our donors, supporters, members, and chapter activists. Thank you for all you do!